West Nile Virus Surveillance in Birds & Humans - Los Angeles County Epidemiology Report

2016
Nov 5

Veterinary Public Health Program – Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Testing dead birds in Los Angeles County for West Nile Virus (WNV) helps identify potential areas of elevated WNV risk for humans. Birds tend to die from WNV before human cases appear. Birds dying from WNV can also infect local mosquitoes. Therefore discovery of WNV in dead birds serves as an early warning of the virus being active in the environment. This year, clusters of WNV-positive birds in Los Angeles and Santa Clarita this year may indicate that these are areas of higher risk for human WNV exposure. *For more information or to report a dead bird, please visit http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/vet/WNV.htm. Learn more about WNV in people at http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/vectorwestnile.htm.*

As of **November 5th, 2016,** a total of 182 reported dead birds were tested for WNV in Los Angeles County. 121 (66%) were positive. Most birds that tested positive for WNV were American Crows (88%).

In May, there was a sudden increase in the number and percentage of birds testing positive for WNV. This shows that the WNV season started in May, about one month earlier than it did in last year.

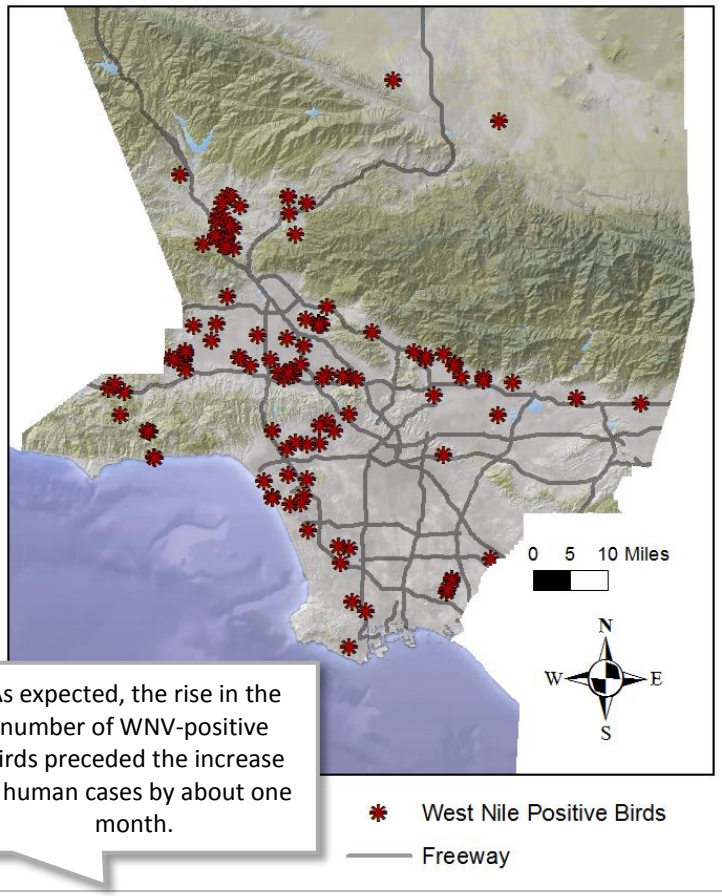
The cities of Los Angeles and Santa Clarita have had the highest number of WNV-positive birds this year to date, with 49 and 24 cases, respectively.

Table 1. Top 5 cities with the highest number of dead birds that tested positive for WNV

City	#	% of all positives
1. Los Angeles	49	40%
2. Santa Clarita	24	20%
3. Altadena	5	4%
4. Agoura Hills*	4	3%
4. Calabasas*	4	3%
5. Burbank	3	2%

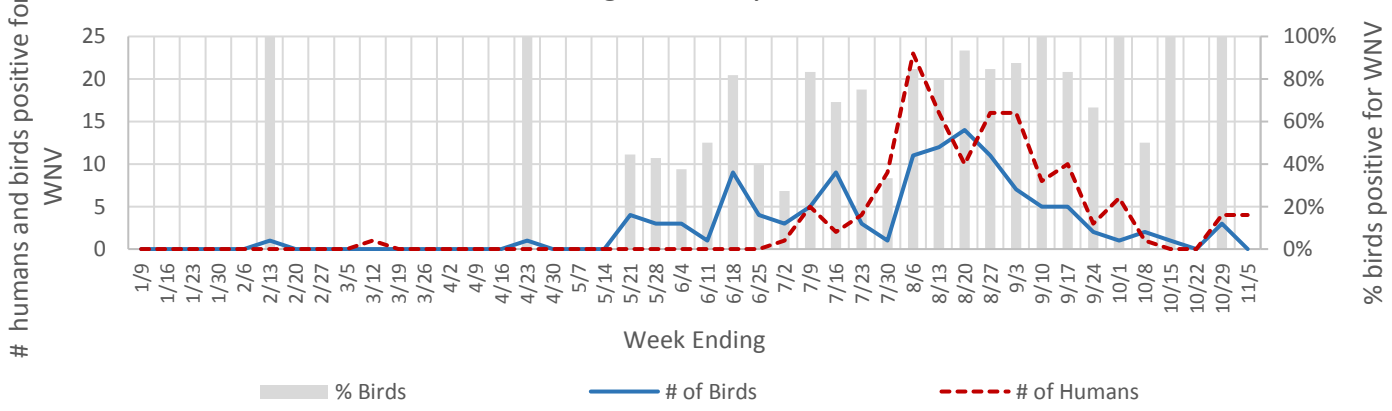
*tied

West Nile Virus Positive Birds by location where found, Los Angeles County, Jan - Nov 5, 2016



As expected, the rise in the number of WNV-positive birds preceded the increase in human cases by about one month.

Dead birds tested and human cases that were **positive for WNV**, by week
*Los Angeles County, 2016**



*through Nov 5, 2016

These data were compiled by the West Nile Virus Surveillance Program of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH). This program is collaborative effort involving the public, vector control agencies, animal control agencies, wildlife rehabilitators, CDPH, and the Veterinary Public Health Program of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. 11.30.2016 JL EB

County of Los Angeles Public Health
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